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CONFIDENTIAL.

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PART II.

FURTHER PAPERS

RELATING TO THE

CONDITION

OF

CHRISTIANS IN TURKEY.

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Printed for the use of the Foreign Office. December 4, 1860.

CONFIDENTIAL.

Further Papers relating to the Condition of Christians in Turkey.

No. 1.

Acting Consul Abbott to Lord J. Russell.—(Received October 29.)

(No. 10.)

Dardanelles, September 26, 1860.

My Lord,

IN conformity with the instructions conveyed in Sir Henry Bulwer's circular despatch dated the 11th of June last, I have the honour to transmit herewith to your Lordship copy of my reply to his Excellency's despatch above alluded to, and of my answers to the Queries contained in an accompanying circular from his Excellency of the same date, respecting the general condition of the Province of Bigha, within the jurisdiction of this Consulate.

I have, &c.

(Signed) WILLIAM G. ABBOTT.

Inclosure 1 in No. 1.

Acting Consul Abbott to Sir H. Bulwer.

Dardanelles, September 24, 1860.

Sir,

IN compliance with the instructions contained in your Excellency's despatch marked Circular, dated the 11th of June last, I do myself the honour to submit to your Excellency in the form of an inclosure my replies to the Queries contained in the accompanying circular of the same date.

The deep importance of the subject to which they refer, entailing the necessity of obtaining information from persons who have had the opportunity of being thoroughly acquainted with all classes of the inhabitants, may form some plea for my having been hitherto unable to transmit these replies to your Excellency.

I will now proceed to express to your Excellency my ideas on those points which form the subject of your Excellency's circular, so far as they bear upon the actual state of things in the Province of Bigha and its neighbourhood, and which I conceive to be more or less analogous to that which exists in the maritime provinces of Anatolia.

There has doubtless been a marked change for the better since the promulgation of the Edict of Gulhané, the provisions of which have been gradually introduced. The Hatti-Hümayoun cannot, however, as yet be said to have produced any substantial benefits, as the Porte has not yet framed those laws and instructions, therein promised, without which it is impossible for the local authorities to carry its provisions into effect. For instance, the better organisation of the police, the reforms in the prison department, the encouragement of native agriculture and industry by a remodelling of the fiscal system, the impulse to be given to traffic by the improvement and construction of roads, the formation of codes of law and procedure,—none of these ameliorations have been effected, nor can anything be done towards their introduction until the Central Government takes the initiative.

Although the venality of Turkish functionaries cannot be denied, still I am

led to think that it affects Government as a whole to a much greater degree than it does private individuals, thus tending more to the detriment of the financial interests of the Government than to the perversion of justice. In other words, private favour is purchased at the expense of public welfare, and the state is the principal sufferer. The time, however, seems to have passed in which bribery was necessary to obtain a favourable decision in a suit. A one-sided judgment is now generally obtained through the medium of some party who has sufficient friendship and influence with the chief functionaries, and who by dint of persuasion and soft arguments secures the desired end. It is thus that on most occasions, the miscarriage of justice is rather owing to favouritism than to open corruption.

There is now less open violence and corruption on the part of the authorities, but still oppression and injustice are committed under the garb of equity, and every kind of iniquity is perpetrated under the hypocritical pretence of administering the law. Precautions are, however, taken to guard against detection.

I have devoted my earnest attention to ascertain, amidst the intricacies in which the question is involved, upon whom the fault of the unsatisfactory condition of the country lies, and have arrived at the conclusion that the Central Government, notwithstanding all its sincerity of purpose to promote public welfare, has decidedly a large share in the blame, and has shown itself unequal to the task of governing the population at large, through its ignorance both of what is required for that purpose, and how to discharge the duties of legislation.

That the masses are far from being happy is undeniable. The rural population universally complain of their primates much more than of the Government officials, with whom they are seldom placed in contact, and the primates throw the blame upon the officials. The peasantry, especially in the Christian villages, dare not denounce the tyranny of their primates, having no hopes of obtaining redress from the officials, and every one is apprehensive of the persecution to which he would be exposed, even in the event of so doubtful an occurrence happening as their getting justice done. For this reason they meekly submit to injustice, as the lesser of the two evils; but they cannot be said to be disaffected towards the Government, entertaining the belief that it is not aware of the extent of their sufferings.

The urban population have more legitimate cause of complaint against the Government officials, and are alive to all their faults, freely making comments on their characters and qualifications. At the same time, they have no confidence whatever in the Central Government, for they know full well, especially the middle classes, that the Porte itself is more or less cognizant of the abuse of authority committed by its employés, and they do not disguise their sentiments of contempt at the feebleness manifested by the Government in failing to exercise proper control over the Local Governors, and to provide for the due administration of the laws.

The people often pass derisive remarks on some of the laws, knowing that, ere a few weeks have elapsed, they will become dead letters. Comments are openly made upon the corruption, jobbery, and peculation which are rampant in every Government Department at the capital. The lavish expenditure of the revenue, wrung out of the sweat of the poor man's brow, and the financial embarrassment of the Government, cause much scandal amongst the people, render it daily more despicable in their eyes, and portend the ruin of the State.

The Christians think that their Turkish rulers are incorrigible, that good government is impracticable under the dominion of the Ottoman race, and that every Turk hates civilization, even though, to outward appearance, his manners are polished and his ideas enlightened. They rejoice, moreover, at the seemingly approaching downfall of the Ottoman Empire. The upper classes maintain that the Government is totally indifferent as to how the provinces are governed, provided the revenue is regularly remitted to the Treasury at Constantinople.

Notwithstanding this, I do not admit that the Rayah population of the provinces have more cause of complaint than their Mussulman fellow-subjects. I am of opinion that their grievances are nearly identical, with the distinction, however, that the local authorities show more consideration and favour to Turks than to Rayahs. What I wish to explain is, that more leniency is shown towards a Mussulman than towards a Christian culprit; and in law-suits the former meets with partiality, which to the latter is denied. A Rayah's trespasses

are made the subject of graver consideration than a Turk's, and his demands never meet with so prompt a compliance as those of a Mussulman. There is, however, an exception to these rules in cases of wealthy or influential persons, for they are generally able to secure a leaning in their favour; but if a public functionary becomes personally offended with any individual, be he Turk or Christian, that individual is marked out as an object of persecution or of denial of justice.

All this evil is practised under the semblance of justice, and, ostensibly, according to the decisions of the Medjlis; but it is, in reality, preconcerted, for the members of that Council, if not already prompted, gather from the President's expressions his wishes, and frame their decisions in blind and servile obedience to them. If an inquiry were made into any complaint, the Porte would limit itself to requiring a report from the Medjlis concerning the matter, and the members would affix their seals to any "Mazbata" which the Pasha or functionary implicated might choose to draw up, containing a tissue of the most barefaced falsehoods. This "Mazbata" would be considered conclusive, and the charge dismissed as unfounded, without the complainant being allowed to learn the contents of the document, in order to confute it. It will thus be seen that the detection of injustice verges at present on the impossible.

One of the greatest public calamities appears to be, that no class can look for the redress of its wrongs, or the protection of its rights, at the hands of its rulers, all confidence in the integrity of the Porte's officials being shaken. If, indeed, the Government has provided any means for remedying these evils, they are practically futile. At all events, no general cure is known to exist.

It might reasonably have been expected that the general condition of the country ought, by this time, to have so far improved as to have inspired the whole population with the certain conviction that any just claim, even from the humblest individual, would meet with a fair investigation, that the Porte would have devised such checks over its functionaries as to prevent the possibility of the powers confided to them being abused, and would have exercised the utmost vigilance over their conduct. Such, unfortunately, is not the case. Too much power is confided to the chief local authorities; the laws and regulations are framed so carelessly—their construction is so defective (no provision being made for securing adhesion to them)—that it is obvious they are the work of persons inexperienced in the art of legislation. The consequence is, that with a host of officials who suffer no opportunity to escape them of abusing their power whenever they can derive any substantial advantage therefrom, the laws are either eluded or converted into instruments of oppression.

Of many of the laws the people are kept in total ignorance. Were they allowed access to the Codes, the most beneficial results might be anticipated; and if some means were devised for promptly redressing wrongs, the authorities would, doubtless, be often deterred from transgressing the law from the mere shame of being detected.

As I have before stated, an excess of power is concentrated in one hand. If that power were distributed, and distinct duties and responsibilities assigned to each employé—so as, in fact, to reduce them to be mere machines of government—the more advantageous would it be for the country.

I trace, as one of the principal causes which renders the laws, framed in a most laudable spirit, perfectly inoperative, the fact of the Government trusting the welfare of the province to the sole goodwill of the Governors, believing that they will carry out implicitly its instructions, without requiring proof of their being fulfilled. Thus, for instance, in the Porte's Proclamation of the 2nd of March, 1846, the Governors and other authorities are expressly forbidden to receive bribes, to impose "corvées" without payment, &c.; but I observe that the only check attempted to be imposed is, strange to say, confided to the Governors themselves, who are commanded to report any person infringing this order. The Porte appears to have forgotten that the Governor himself might be the first person to set this order at defiance; so that it is rendered nugatory to all intents and purposes.

The upper classes of the provincial population have learnt, with much satisfaction, the result of the Grand Vizier's tour in Bulgaria and Bosnia, and especially of the punishment of those employés who have been detected in misconduct; but some persons imagine that, as soon as his back is turned, the same evil courses will be renewed, with more precaution to prevent detection.

There is a wish expressed by many that his Highness would visit this province, where the administration of the present Governor has created the greatest dissatisfaction among all classes. Many of the present Governor's predecessors evinced sincerity of purpose and a readiness to ameliorate the condition of the country to the best of their ability. A friendly hint was generally sufficient to arrest any incipient symptoms of foul play.

The intentions of the Sultan, as expressed in the Hatti-Humayoun, cannot be carried out to their full extent until the authorities are impressed with the intimate conviction that no misdeed on their part will go unpunished. In proportion as the means of acquiring illicit gains are circumscribed, the means of detecting such abuses will be enlarged; and when the strictest investigation into an official's conduct, be he of the highest rank, follows upon his denunciation by even the humblest individual, then, I think, the Hatti-Humayoun may be enforced with safety, notwithstanding the incongruities existing between the various races and creeds. It is evident, however, that the officials will be the greatest opponents of reform, for, accustomed as they have hitherto been to enrich themselves by the lax system in vigour, they will be very loth to give up altogether the opportunity of doing so any longer.

The people would welcome reforms in a substantial form: but the Porte should proceed with the greatest circumspection—in order to convince all classes of its sincerity and anxious wish for their welfare,—by lightening the burdens at present borne by the people, by taking the initiative in inviting inquiry respecting abuse of power, and by promptly redressing complaints. If these steps preceded the introduction of other reforms, all classes would become much more attached to their Sovereign, receiving substantial proofs of his heartfelt solicitude.

In dealing, however, with the present crisis, the sanguine reformer and the pioneer of civilisation must be careful lest he mistake appearances for realities. A too sudden influx of reforms into a corrupt, worn-out State, not unfrequently resembles in its effects the administration to a death-stricken man of drugged slow poison under the garb of a restorative remedy. For the time being the sufferer is lulled into gentle repose; the anxious lookers-on mistake approaching death for calm slumber.

With respect to my suggestion as to the advisability of the "Mehkemeh," or Turkish Religious Court, being amalgamated with the proposed Civil Tribunals, I have considered that, out of deference to the religious susceptibilities of the Mussulmans, it would be well that they should have the option of settling their disputes, as at present, according to the law of the Koran, but I make no doubt that they will ere long perceive how far superior are the advantages to be derived from bringing their cases before the civil tribunals, giving them, as it will, the privilege of appeal. It is thus probable that the Religious Law will gradually fall into desuetude.

The Provincial Deputies, who, I suggested, might reside at the capital, would eventually set aside the necessity of the spiritual Chiefs enjoying civil jurisdiction. I had purposely abstained from recommending that these Deputies should form one body, but, in course of time, they might possibly unite as a Deliberative Assembly, and be consulted by Government on various points connected with legislation and administration.

Gradually, too, the system of governing the provinces by means of Pashas might be altered. At all events, the Porte may now, with advantage, diminish the number of Governors, and effect a considerable economy by curtailing the preposterous salaries at present assigned to them.

The proper administration of justice is the first requirement; and next to this in importance is the application of the principles of political economy. To the neglect of these essential points we must ascribe the origin of the present crisis; and we can only hope that a satisfactory solution will follow their adoption. The real danger to the country lies in withholding from the population the promised reforms; for, unless something be done speedily to satisfy the legitimate aspirations of the people, a serious convulsion may occur at no distant epoch, and the Government will awake from its present lethargy to a realization of the fact that the concessions have been granted too late.

I have, &c.

(Signed) WILLIAM G. ABBOTT.

Inclosure 2 in No. 1.

Answers to Queries.

1. THE general condition of this province is extremely unfavourable: whilst, on the one hand, the population is suffering from the distress caused by the stagnation of trade, and the failure of the crops during a succession of years; on the other hand, the neglect manifested by the Turkish Government to promote public welfare, either in a judicial, administrative, or financial point of view, further aggravates the distress by creating a general feeling of insecurity as to life, personal liberty, and property; fatal to enterprise, and development of commercial and agricultural prosperity.

The most prominent sources of numerous evils are:—

1st. The irregularity in the elections of the members of the Medjlises and Chiefs of Communities.

2nd. The want of properly-constituted tribunals.

3rd. The inefficiency and bad organization of the police.

4th. The shocking condition of the prisons.

5th. The obstacles in the way of obtaining redress for individual grievances.

6th. The vicious fiscal system in vigour.

Lastly. The absence of means of internal communication and of conveyance of produce.

2. The adult male population of the Province of Bigha was ascertained in 1855 to be as follows:—

Mussulmans		26,325
Greeks	4,451	
Armenians	588	
Israelites	370	
Gipsies	392	
Foreigners	100	
	——	5,901
Total ..		32,226

3. In the country there are both Mussulman and Christian landholders, but the former are more numerous, the Christians in this province being in the minority. Almost everybody possesses landed property. In the towns, the majority of persons engaged in trade, as well as artizans, are Christians and Jews.

4. They can; and their pecuniary means being larger than those of the Mussulmans, they are constantly purchasing property from the latter. I understand, however, that formerly Christians were restricted from so doing; but the prohibition, as regards this province, was abolished some years ago, mainly through the instrumentality of Mr. Consul Calvert.

5. They can; and their superior intelligence enables them to do so with greater advantages. There are very few Turks engaged in trade in the towns of this province.

6. In the Christian villages, the peasantry are decidedly better off in a pecuniary point of view than the Mussulmans, being so much more provident and industrious than the latter. The Mussulman population are less able to pay the taxation in bad years than the Christians.

7. It is admitted; though, generally speaking, the testimony of a Mussulman carries with it more weight. I may here add, that circumstantial evidence, though of the clearest nature, is refused; that the Tidjaret-Medjlis, or Commercial Tribunal, goes only upon documentary evidence; that the testimony of one female is rejected as insufficient, whilst that of two females, of whatever creed, is accepted, being considered equivalent to that of one male. Owing to these peculiarities of Turkish law, a miscarriage of justice often ensues; whilst the fear of incurring vengeance deters many persons, both Mussulmans and Christians, from prosecuting notorious malefactors, or giving evidence against them.

8. The condition of the Christians has been gradually ameliorating during the last twenty years; and the Christians themselves acknowledge this to be the case. For the last five years, however, everything has been at a standstill, and

little or no attempt has been made by Government to better the condition of either the Mussulman or Christian population.

9. Government offices are but sparingly bestowed upon Christians, and in the Local Councils they are invariably assigned an inferior seat to that of their Mussulman colleagues. I may also state, under this head, that Christians are prohibited from wearing arms and possessing slaves, which are allowed to Mahometans. These, as far as I am aware, are the only ostensible inequalities that can be said now to be dependent on religion. The rooted prejudice of Mussulmans against those who are not of their own creed will ever constitute an inequality, until the administration of justice be placed on a sound footing.

10. The Christian population in this province have a decided repugnance to enter the military service, and prefer as a lesser evil to pay the "bedelieh" tax, which exempts them from it. I think in the end they would be greater gainers by not entering the army, which does not present great advantages in any point of view. The "kharatch" was considered by the Rayahs an odious imposition, being looked upon by them as a tax for their religious persuasion: the "bedelieh," which was substituted for that tax a few years ago, is less unpopular, although it is somewhat higher in amount.

The conscription is abhorred by all classes of Mussulmans, who regard it in the light of an unavoidable evil; indeed, they would cheerfully pay the tax to be exempted from military service. This latter fact is unmistakeable on witnessing the "kourà," or drawing of conscripts, though, of late, volunteers present themselves for service in the army.

11. Formerly it was a difficult matter for Christians to construct churches without paying large fees to the Porte and to the Turkish officials; but I believe they might even then repair their churches. At present the permission to build places of worship is readily granted, and the Christians in this province enjoy unrestricted liberty in following their religious observances. Their places of worship are respected by even the lower classes of Mussulmans; and marriage and funeral processions when passing in public thoroughfares meet with no kind of molestation.

12. No case of oppression has occurred against Christians in particular on account of their religious persuasion, the grievances of the Christians in this province being identical with those of the whole population; thus any individual case of oppression, be the sufferer Turk or Christian, is to be traced to injustice on the part of the local authorities to serve their own private interests. Unscrupulous persons of the higher classes often contrive to oppress persons of inferior classes, either with or without the connivance of the public functionaries.

13. There are no Protestant subjects of the Porte in this province.

14. A large proportion of their grievances is owing to the rapacity of their own authorities, and they undoubtedly suffer more vexations in the collection of the taxes at the hands of their Primates than from Government functionaries. I trace in the conduct of the chiefs of the communities the origin of the failure of the valuable institution of the Medjlis, which was conceived in a most liberal spirit by the Government. It was probably the intention of the Government that the privilege of electing the members of the Provincial and District Medjlises should be exercised collectively by a general meeting of all the Chiefs of the respective communities, so as to insure the "Azas," or elected members of the Medjlis, being *de facto* representatives of the people, and persons enjoying the confidence of the majority of their co-religionists. But as the Government has never clearly defined its views on this point, possibly deeming it best to allow each community to manage its own affairs, the practice has arisen for the Chiefs of the several communities alone of the chief town in the province or district, where the seat of the Local Government is established, to arrogate entirely to themselves the election of the "Azas." Thus the rural communities are excluded from having the least voice or share in the election of those members. This, however, is not the only evil of the present want of system, for the election of the Chiefs of communities is virtually usurped by an oligarchy of persons, generally the most wealthy, and not the most intelligent or upright individuals of the community, who constitute themselves into a kind of municipal body and direct the interests of the whole community according to their own dictates. These self-elected Primates do not enjoy the confidence or esteem of those over whom they domineer.

In the year 1840, the Porte fixed the amount of "verghi," or annual tribute, which this province was to contribute. The Provincial Medjlis thereupon

allotted the tax amongst the various districts under its jurisdiction. The District Medjlises in turn adjusted their respective contributions between the various villages and communities. (These amounts, as then settled, have never varied, since no provision has been made by the Government or the Provincial Medjlis for revising the quota from time to time by a fresh evaluation: some of the districts and communities affected by altered circumstances, are less favoured than others.) The Primates, upon whom devolves the task of collecting the taxes from the people, and of paying the amount into the Government Revenue Office of the district, are left to assess, on whatever basis they deem proper to adopt, each individual of the community, with a pro-ratâ share of the tax. Sometimes the basis is regulated upon the value of property or the supposed income of the individual, and occasionally according to the number of ploughs he uses, or to other indications of his relative means. The Primates are under the imputation of taking an undue advantage of their position, by underrating their own portion of the taxes, and even of levying in the aggregate more than the legal amount. They also occasionally borrow money in the name of the community at high rates of interest, and too often neglect, in seasons of prosperity, to liquidate the debt, when the people would best be able to do so. I hear it stated as a fact that many persons who have sold their property are, nevertheless, still compelled to contribute the tax primitively imposed upon them; whilst others who have since acquired much property are not called upon to pay additional taxes. Very frequently the Primates evade for years together submitting any accounts to their community. The position of the Cogiabashis, beyond the opportunity it affords them of making illicit gains with impunity, is not altogether an enviable one, for they meet with no consideration or respect from the local authorities, and are occasionally incarcerated by the revenue officials for the arrears of taxes due by their community, for the punctual payment of which, those functionaries, I think unjustly, hold them responsible.

The power which the Cogiabashis have of imprisoning, without any formality, individuals of the community for non-payment of the taxes, enables them in turn to exercise petty tyranny.

The spiritual Chiefs are invested with a certain extent of judicial power over their flocks, and in the exercise of it, as well as in ecclesiastical matters, money removes every scruple, and all decisions are previously bargained for in the most unblushing manner. The Christians are exposed to many arbitrary exactions on their part. The barefaced simony which disgraces the Greek Church, and the gross ignorance of the clergy, are facts unfortunately too notorious to need any mention of them. The clergy, instead of being in the receipt of regular stipends, are obliged to contribute a fixed annual sum to their diocesans, whose principal aim appears to be that of amassing wealth at the expense of their co-religionists. Although the people are fully aware of these corrupt practices, the clergy maintain great influence over their minds; the various sects are firmly attached to the creed of their forefathers, and are blind to the superstitions which characterize their churches.

15. The Provincial Medjlis at the town of the Dardanelles is composed of: the Pasha as President, the Muhassebegi, or Accountant-General, the Mufti, or Expounder of the Religious Law, the Cadi, or Judge, *ex officio*; five Turkish members, two Greek members, one Armenian member, two Jewish members, annually elected.

The District Councils are composed of: the Kaimakam, or the Mudir, the Sandouk-Emini, or Treasury officer, the Naib, or Deputy Judge, a few Mussulman and Christian members.

It will thus be seen that Christians are admitted into the Local Councils.

It is with regret that I have to state that owing to the servility of the Azas, the opinion of the President, whether Pasha, Kaimakam, or Mudir, is that which invariably dominates. It, therefore, depends entirely upon the individual fitness and goodwill of the chief local authority to exercise a favourable influence or otherwise upon the welfare of the country by the reform of abuses. An incompetent, wrong-minded Pasha frequently undoes nearly all the good produced under the administration of his predecessor, whilst the fact of his power being uncontrolled renders nugatory the institution of the Medjlis, which ought to have been attended with the most beneficial results.

I attribute the supineness of the Azas principally to their nomination being purely honorary, and also to their fear of giving offence to the chief

functionaries, who are in the receipt of large salaries, and who can command great influence in high quarters.

With respect to the District Councils, they naturally take their tone from the Provincial Councils.

This is a sample of what occurs in the smaller towns of Turkey, whilst where the seat of the Local Government is situated in large cities, the members of the Medjlis generally seek through their position solely to benefit their own individual interests to the prejudice of the community at large, whom they in nowise represent, on account of the irregular mode of their election. These are the members who frequently exercise a most baneful influence over the President by encouraging the continuance of old abuses, which it is their interest to foster, and through which they often amass immense wealth. In some provinces members of this description gain such an ascendancy over the Pasha that they virtually rule the Pashalic. The ill-gotten wealth of these petty tyrants enables them to follow with impunity their iniquitous course, for they can afford to dispense bribes in high quarters, so that oppression triumphs, and the cries of the suffering poor seldom reach the ears of their beneficent Monarch. It appears to me, therefore, that unless the present defects in the Medjlis, chiefly as regards the elections of the members, be eradicated, that institution will continue to be totally inefficacious to produce progress and good government. As so much depends upon the manner in which the chief functionaries choose to wield their authority, and on their individual bent of mind, the Porte ought to be circumspect in the selection of its employés. It is notorious that many of those officials whose misconduct has entailed upon them the loss of office are subsequently re-admitted into favour and entrusted with other responsible posts. It were needless to add that the bad example thus set by the Porte cannot fail to foster laxness of principles amongst all classes of its employés.

16. I think it is desirable that some radical reform should be introduced so as to ensure the members of the Medjlis being—as seems to have been contemplated by the Porte—*de facto* Representatives of the people. It would be advisable for them to be elected by the entire community in the respective provinces or districts, and not, as heretofore, to owe their election to merely a limited number of votes of individuals who assume upon themselves to be chiefs of communities. The members should receive fixed salaries from Government as a compensation for their services, and sufficiently remunerative to be an inducement to persons possessing independent opinions, and enjoying public confidence, to offer themselves as candidates for election by the people. It is indispensable that rules be framed so as to ensure freedom of discussion in the Councils being respected, and thus prevent the opinions of the President overruling those of the members. The members of the Medjlis should be sworn in on entering that body. I would further suggest that Commissioners should be sent for the first three or four years to assist in establishing the regularity of the elections of Deputies and Chiefs of communities.

The present attributes of the Pasha and Medjlis are so numerous and important that I am led to think that the separation of the administrative from the judicial attributes is of paramount necessity, it being quite incompatible for them to work well together, for justice is now too frequently sacrificed to expediency. It therefore appears to me that the administrative attributes might with advantage be left to the Medjlis, but not the judicial powers. I think, moreover, that the Medjlis should be invested with the faculty of imposing local rates for local improvements, without reference to the Porte, for on this point it seems to be deprived of any power at all, except at rare intervals when the sanction of the Government is granted.

17. It is undoubtedly highly desirable that the judicial functions should be altogether withdrawn from the Medjlis, and confided to separate independent tribunals, to be created for that purpose. I confess, however, that the chief obstacle to the creation of such tribunals exists in the deficiency of the proper component elements; in other words, in the difficulty of finding individuals of sufficient intelligence, integrity, or impartiality, to administer even-handed justice without bias or favour. I would suggest that there be instituted separate tribunals for civil and for criminal cases; that each tribunal be presided over by a Turkish Judge appointed by Government, and having a permanent jury of about six members, to be annually elected by the various communities, together with two Registrars, Mussulman and Christian, and a staff of Civil officers and

subordinates, to carry into execution the orders of the Court. All these individuals should receive adequate salaries from the Government.

The attributes of the "Mekhemeh," or Turkish Religious Court, which have been much abridged of late years, are now confined chiefly to the treatment of matters which in England appertain to the Ecclesiastical Courts, such as inheritance, divorce, and others of a like nature, which fall within the province of the religious law. It also decides in some civil cases where rights concerning real property are involved, and it is the only Department where notarial acts are done. It would be expedient, if not entirely to abolish, at least to amalgamate the "Mekhemeh" with the proposed Civil tribunal. Where both parties should agree to this course, the Turkish Cadi or Judge might still in those tribunals continue to administer, in conjunction with the Mufti, the religious law, as regards Mahometans, and might possibly, with advantage, be assisted by the Mussulman members of the Civil Court. In like manner, with the express consent of the parties concerned, the spiritual Chiefs of the other communities might continue to adjudicate in similar cases amongst their own co-religionists.

18. The Mahometans in this province do not appear to evince any particular desire to make proselytes, unless the parties spontaneously offer themselves as candidates. They seem anxious to ascertain the sincerity of those who present themselves for that purpose. No case of compulsory conversion has occurred for a great number of years.

19. The following facts will serve to show that in cases of the conversion of females to the Mahometan creed, neither parties are really influenced by religious enthusiasm. That plea is frequently advanced when either of the parties wishes to be united to the object of their predilection. There is no distinction, on this score, in the passions which influence the human mind, whether in Turkey or in other countries; and it would be absurd that when solitary instances of conversion, which are comparatively rare, do occur in Turkey, they should be attributed to fanaticism. When parallel cases occur in Europe or elsewhere, they are traced to their natural cause—the weakness of human nature, or the laxness of religious principles; and the same cause operates in Turkey.

Last year, a young Armenian woman desired to become a convert to Mahometanism. She belonged to the town of Panderino; and, leaving her home, repaired to the harem of a wealthy Turk named Veli Aga, of Bighachehri, in this province. At the request of the Chiefs of the Armenian community of this place, the Pasha caused her to be brought into town, and placed in a house apart, where priests of her creed, as well as the Armenian Primates and her relatives, were able to confer with her unrestrictedly; in short, every opportunity was freely afforded her of forming a mature decision. No compulsion of any kind, nor undue means, were resorted to. She was obdurate in her resolution to embrace Islamism, and asserted that Mahomet had appeared to her in a dream, urging her to follow the true faith. She is now the mistress of Veli Aga; and, from what the Armenian Primates themselves told me at the time, it would appear that she was of an immoral character, and had kept up an illicit intercourse with her Turkish paramour previous to the period of her professing Islamism.

There was another case, about twelve years ago, of a young Greek female, named Elizabeth, who was abducted from her home at Eziné, in this province, by a Turk who was enamoured of her; and being persuaded to declare herself a convert to Mahometanism, she confirmed her resolution before the local Medjlis. She was placed in the harem of the Malmoudir, or Collector of the Revenue, but shortly afterwards escaped, and took refuge in the British Consulate, where she was hidden, until an opportunity offered of sending her secretly to Smyrna; she was there placed under charge of the Greek Archbishop, and subsequently some Armenian missionaries educated her. She has since returned to her native place. In this case the local authorities, on her evasion being discovered, tried to find out what had become of her, and some Turks were mortified on becoming aware that she had changed her mind, but, generally speaking, the affair did not awaken their susceptibilities. I may add that, on the girl's mother complaining to the Pasha of the abduction, the Turk was prosecuted for the offence, and imprisoned. It is a singular fact that this young female imagined herself to have been spell-bound when she declared herself a convert to Mahometanism, asserting that she felt an irresistible impulse to do so.

20. Having already adverted to the institution of independent tribunals, I think it is necessary that proper Codes of Procedure and of Civil Law, especially as relating to contracts, be framed, and adopted in the Civil Tribunals. At the present moment there is no defined Code for the guidance of the judicial authorities in the discharge of their functions, except a few general and incomplete instructions which tend frequently to create embarrassment and misconception; so that the course of the proceedings in any suit varies according to the discretion of the officials. The Turkish laws are known to be very elastic, and the administration of justice lax in the extreme. Many cunning devices are resorted to in order to have the proceedings conducted in such a manner as to afford greater advantages over the opposite party; and no effort is spared to obtain the patronage of influential persons, by whose means the minds of those who sit in judgment are secretly biassed.

It is a peculiarity of all Turkish Tribunals that lawyers are excluded altogether from appearing on behalf of suitors; and the only privilege allowed is that, under certain restrictions, an agent, not connected with the legal profession, may appear for the party concerned. This prejudice against lawyers may possibly arise from the apprehension that an advocate might, by subtle arguments, embarrass the Tribunal. The consequence is, that there exist no native jurisconsults in Turkey. At some future period this prejudice of the Turkish Tribunals may be overcome by the consideration that open advocacy of a cause is certainly more conducive to the ends of justice than the secret machinations now employed to pervert the minds of the Judges. Such being the case at present, it is requisite that the greatest care should be taken in the framing of an accurate and well-defined Code of Procedure, and that the strictest injunctions be given to adhere to it without deviation in any particular. I attach the deepest importance to the formation of a proper Code of Procedure, having observed how the existing clumsy machinery of Turkish law affords not only a scope for the exercise of one-sided justice, but also frequently prevents the true merits of the case at issue being elicited, even when no unfair bias can be supposed to exist.

In civilized countries, the presence of legal practitioners to whom parties may commit the conduct of their interests, renders it unnecessary for each individual to make himself acquainted with the laws; but in Turkey, owing to the paucity of booksellers and the absence of lawyers, this deficiency must be supplied by the adoption of some other method. I would therefore suggest that the various Codes should not only be translated into the different languages, but that the chiefs of all the communities should be supplied with a certain number of copies; and that they should, moreover, always be on sale at the Tribunals, to meet the exigencies of the public: so that an opportunity should at least be afforded to all classes of becoming acquainted with the laws framed for their benefit.

I think that religious oaths, as being most binding on the consciences of the witnesses, would be essential, and should be administered by the clergy of each respective creed.

It would be a salutary measure for the Tribunals to be sworn-in at certain regular intervals, so as to inculcate their minds with a deep conviction of the solemn nature of the charge committed to them.

No member of the Court should be competent to take any part in the proceedings in any suit in which he or either of the parties are under actual obligations to each other (such as standing in the mutual position of debtor and creditor, of master and servant, or of near relationship, partnership, &c.); or if, in the matter before the Court he is either directly or beneficially interested, or has given advice, or promised to favour either party.

In order to give full effect to these indispensable rules, the Judge should, immediately before the hearing of the case in open Court, require of the members present to declare whether any one of them labours under any such legal disability. Any member who replies in the affirmative should be forthwith required simply to confirm the fact to the Court under oath, but without being obliged to disclose the grounds or nature of such disability, and should, thereupon, withdraw from the Court, unless both parties should consent to his remaining. As an additional check, the plaintiff and defendant should, in turn, have the faculty of objecting to any member, provided that such party shall state on oath that, to the best of his knowledge and belief, he has just grounds for

objection, and explain briefly in what the alleged disability consists. Thereupon, the Judge shall require of that member to reply on oath in respect thereto either in the affirmative or in the negative. If that member denies the allegation, the Court shall proceed summarily to examine and pronounce upon the question of the disability. In order to deter the members from concealing disabilities, and the party to the suit from making trivial allegations, the Court should impose a fine upon the person in default. I would propose the fine to be levied in proportion to the amount of the claim at issue.

In committing itself to the task of remodelling the whole system of judicial proceedings, the Porte might advantageously consult the various practices adopted by civilized countries, and derive therefrom many useful limits.

I have thus endeavoured to point out the method for obtaining a better administration of justice in this country; but I would here observe that Courts of Appeal should be formed in each Eyalet, for they are much wanted—there being no such Court, except in commercial cases, to which a suitor might apply for the revision of a sentence, in the case of error of judgment or defect in the procedure. Without such a Court, it may easily be conceived what latitude is afforded for pronouncing absurd or unfair decisions, and for the neglect of those forms of procedure which constitute the safeguard of equity.

Under the Medjlis system, the only remedy open to suitors is to have their cases retried on a change of the Pasha; but no record being kept of the proceedings of the Medjlis, the judgments being invariably oral, no written proofs of any sentence exist, and, consequently, no notice is taken of what had been decided under a previous Pasha. I have heard of one case which was tried at least four times, under as many different Pashas; and at last the plaintiff obtained a judgment against the defendant, to the unbounded surprise of everybody, on account of its evident injustice. The utmost privilege, if such it can be called, which appears to be allowed to suitors is, the faculty of choosing whether their cases should be tried by the Local Courts, or referred at once to Constantinople; but the latter course is seldom resorted to, as it entails the personal attendance of the parties, occasioning them much inconvenience and expense: besides which, it does not offer them much greater advantages, it being generally well understood that, whichever side can command the largest amount of influence at the capital gains the suit.

As regards the appointment of Judges, it may, perhaps, be advisable for the Porte to avail itself of the services of the Cadis, who, from their knowledge of Turkish law, might be the most competent to fill those positions. At present, the Cadis derive a precarious income from fees, many of which are not properly regulated, thus rendering them open to corruption. But it is to be hoped that if they receive adequate salaries, they will be placed above the necessity of resorting to undue means for the purpose of gaining their livelihood.

The police force, from the paucity of its numbers, is totally inadequate to cope with the brigandage with which, at times, the province is infested, and whose attacks upon the lives and property of persons travelling become, at times, very daring. The Government assigns such miserable pittances to the Zaptiehs that it is a wonder how they can subsist upon their pay alone. A certain number of the police force consists of persons of whose antecedents nothing is known except that they have been highway robbers; and often, in the exercise of their duties, they show a great ferocity of disposition. The Zaptiehs act under the immediate orders of the Civil Governors, but they have no communication with the police force of any neighbouring province. This is a great defect in the organisation of the police, and it would be advisable that means were devised to insure co-operation for the apprehension of offenders and the suppression of brigandage.

In many villages in the interior, highway robbers take up their quarters unmolested for the night, and the inhabitants dare not denounce them to the authorities.

I would suggest that the regular police force be materially increased in number, that their pay be higher, and that only persons of good character be employed.

Possibly a local police force might be organized in every village to act in concert with the regular police, under the orders of the Civil Governors, as heretofore.

I cannot take leave of this subject without adverting to the Prison Depart-

ment, which is one of the most crying evils in the Empire. Parties who are accused or suspected are sometimes detained in prison for months before they are brought to trial, and I believe that, on many occasions, this is done for extortionate purposes. Many individuals who, in all probability, would be found guilty of offences, are released without undergoing a trial; whilst those who are innocent languish in jail without any opportunity being afforded them of clearing their character.

The internal state of the prisons is, I regret to say, to the last degree revolting to humanity, and a disgrace to a nation professing to be within the pale of civilisation. Cold must be the heart of that visitant whose sympathies are not awakened by the most superficial inspection within the precincts of these dens! The Turkish prisons are notoriously defective in the accommodation for prisoners, the debtor's jail being close to the dungeon for criminals. The neglect of ventilation and drainage, the absence of any medical attendant or infirmary for sick prisoners, or of any adequate provision for their subsistence—debtors having to live upon charity,—these are a few of the many glaring defects which exist in this Department. The authorities seem to be totally irresponsible in respect to the fate of the unfortunate inmates of a Turkish jail, for no returns are ever required respecting them, no inspection or inquiry held upon their wants, nor control kept over the police who act as jailors. It is a matter of surprise that more advantage is not taken of the helpless position of the prisoners, and that this horrible system does not engender more abuses than it does already. In a word, there is scarcely any institution in Turkey which is more susceptible of reforms than the Prison Department, or one which affords a wider field for the introduction of those philanthropic principles which temper justice with mercy. New prisons should be built forthwith in every town in the Empire, and placed under the superintendence of special salaried officers, assisted by jailors (not by Zaptichs, as at present) acting under the supervision of the Criminal Tribunals and Chiefs of communities. As to the internal organization of the prisons, I think that the Porte should adopt the advice of such Europeans as may possess the requisite knowledge and experience of such matters, acquired in civilised countries. The chief officer of the prison should be required to furnish, weekly, a list of inmates, with proper details respecting them. Any person apprehended by the police, either under a warrant of the Criminal Courts, or whilst committing a breach of the peace, should be conducted to the prison, where the action of the police should cease. No person should be detained more than three days without being brought to trial and acquainted with the offence alleged against him.

With respect to the question of expense, I cannot devise any means whereby the administration of justice, with its corollaries the Police and Prison Departments, can be carried on properly, without an increase to the small expenditure hitherto devoted thereto by the Turkish Government. It will be for the Porte to consider whether part of the revenue ought to be appropriated to promote the welfare and happiness of the country, which cannot exist unless life, personal liberty, and property, be rendered less insecure than is the case at the present moment.

I would here observe that the fees called "ressim," exacted from the party in whose favour a suit is decided, and which now form an emolument of the Civil Governors, might still be levied, but for account of Government towards the support of the tribunals, whose maintenance, by the adoption of this course, would be rendered less burdensome to the Porte.

21. In addition to the various measures adverted to in the Answers 16, 17, and 20, those which could best be selected to improve the condition of the country are: the reformation of the fiscal system now in vigour; the removal of everything that tends to check production; and the formation of good roads. There can be no doubt that the Porte has hitherto ignored the very rudiments of political economy, at least as far as one can judge, by its adherence to the antiquated system of raising revenue at the sacrifice of public welfare and industry. It is obvious that unless the erroneous principles upon which this system is based be eradicated, no amelioration in the material welfare of the country will be effected.

One of the most evidently objectionable taxes is the tithe on agricultural produce, levied in kind at harvest time, which is rendered still more pernicious by being farmed out to speculators by Government. It were needless for me to point

out how injuriously this tax affects the welfare the country by thwarting agricultural enterprise. It would be preferable were a tax on real property substituted in lieu of the tithes. By judicious management in classifying the various descriptions of property, and assessing agricultural lands at lesser rates than would be imposed on house property, there is every reason to believe that a great stimulus might be given to agriculture.

The Mussulman population is, generally speaking, in possession of the largest and most fertile tracts of land; but their natural indolence prevents them from cultivating the whole of their property. By the imposition of a land tax, not necessarily too high, the Turkish landowner would find the mere possession of property, unless brought under cultivation, an unprofitable burden, and thus even the most sluggish would be compelled to turn their lands to better account.

A law exists in Turkey which prescribes that if land be not cultivated for five consecutive years, its ownership shall be forfeited; but this law is inoperative, and there are many vast tracts of land which are suffered by their owners to lie waste perpetually. In the neighbourhood of Christian villages, besides the lands acquired by purchase from Mussulmans, the Christians are continually reclaiming waste lands. The general practice has been for the male adults of a family to unite together for the purpose of clearing waste lands, and rendering them fit for cultivation, after which such property, until a few years ago, descended to the male heirs alone, on the decease of the head of the family. At the present time there is no longer the same encouragement to reclaim waste land, a law having been enacted by which the female members of a family are entitled to share in the inheritance. The male members deem this unjust, more especially as, in the event of the marriage of their sisters, the husbands of the latter would be benefited by the property. Some provision might, therefore, be introduced into the laws to provide for analogous cases, so as to secure to the male members alone the just reward of their labour in reclaiming waste land.

The tax called "salghin," or "verghi," has been already adverted to in Answer 14, where I have pointed out the vexations to which the people are frequently exposed through the rapacity and caprice of their Primates in the unequal assessment of this impost. If the Government sees fit to retain this tax, it ought to be placed on a more equitable footing, and might be extended to Constantinople and its suburbs, which have hitherto been exempt from it, and be revised periodically. It is, nevertheless, indispensable that some check be kept over the Primates in their assessment of it, and with this view it would be advisable for Government to compel them to have their accounts examined and audited regularly by some conscientious functionary deputed expressly for that purpose.

The Customs duty and "miri," or excise, next demand my attention. It is without doubt seriously detrimental that a 5 per cent. duty on imports should exist, whilst export duties are maintained at 12 per cent. Under this system the Empire has been drained of its wealth. It appears, indeed, impolitic for foreign nations to insist upon the continuance of this anomalous state of things, which is at variance with the acknowledged axiom of economical science, that the interests of the producer and consumer are identical. The Customs Tariff should be revised on an equitable basis. Some of the import duties may be raised, and the export duties, if not altogether abolished, reduced to 5 per cent.

In proportion as Turkey is encouraged to develop her immense natural resources, the more will her demand for European manufactures increase, and we may rest assured that our country, above all others, will participate largely in the benefits which will accrue from a removal of those disadvantages which a short-sighted policy has imposed upon the produce and industry of the Ottoman Empire.

What appears to be highly objectionable is the confounding, under the designation of "export duty," the tax, as I may call it, on the coasting trade from one port of the Empire to another, however short the distance. This should be forthwith abolished, as it acts as a barrier to industry, and otherwise operates in a most detrimental manner upon the internal trade of the country. The "miri," or excise, is also productive of evil, being a tax on the produce of native industry, which, in addition to the disadvantages to which it is exposed by the provisions of the Customs Tariff, is checked in many of its branches by being made the object of monopolies to favour a few individuals.

The "miri" duties vary considerably in different districts; for instance, the

tithe on the ovine species throughout Roumelia was recently commuted to a fixed rate of 4 piastres per head, whilst in Anatolia it only amounts to 1½ piastre per head.

The tax on the produce of fisheries, together with the salt monopoly, serve materially to enhance the price to native consumers of important articles of food, and to depress the former branch of industry.

It will thus be seen that the administration of the "miri" demands reform in those points which hamper native industry, whilst the system of monopolies should no longer be tolerated.

It is difficult to understand upon what principle of justice the "bedelieh" tax is levied for the sole benefit of the Treasury, instead of being applied to compensate the Turkish conscripts, upon whom the whole burden of the military service falls.

The tax of 20 per cent. recently imposed upon wines and spirits is an innovation in the right direction, provided a similar duty be imposed on foreign wines and spirits, and a drawback allowed on the exportation of Turkish produce.

In the present embarrassed state of Turkish finances, the Porte might hesitate at the bold step of effecting a radical change in the whole system of raising her revenue; but the sacrifice would be only apparent, for experience has taught other nations that judicious concessions in the interest of production find an ample recompense in an augmentation of the resources of the State. The sale of Crown lands, mines, and forests, and the power of converting the "vakouf" into freehold tenure, would not only afford the Porte the means of extricating itself from its present financial difficulties, but would open a field to enterprise, naturally contributing to the welfare of the country. A tax might be imposed with advantage on coffee-shops, taverns, and tobacconists' shops, as well as on domestic servants and slaves. A duty might also be levied on successions and on transfer of real property, and of slaves. The post-office and stamp duties might, moreover, form a large revenue.

The Porte limits the introduction of ameliorations to the capital, and appears to have lost sight of the welfare of the provinces. The surplus revenues of the provinces, after deduction of the disbursements made for the local administration and the garrison for local defence, are remitted to Constantinople; but the Central Government appears to devote no part of these funds to the improvement of the provinces.

The regulations of the Health Office, which require the shipping employed in the coasting trade to undergo certain formalities and to pay fees, are both useless and vexatious. It would be better were the vessels engaged in the coasting trade, instead of being obliged to exhibit their bills of health, to be provided with annual licenses at some moderate rate; and these licenses might be withdrawn, or heavy fines imposed, in any case of a breach of the Sanitary or Revenue Laws.

The want of good roads is universally acknowledged. I would suggest, as a means of carrying out these and other public works in the country, that the Government should send out competent European engineers to ascertain what improvements should be made, and draw up the necessary plans for their execution. As soon as the engineers have completed their preliminary operations, it might be left to the Local Medjlis to decide whether the improvement should be effected by means of "corvées," by imposing local rates, or by a concession of it to persons willing to undertake the task, empowering the latter to levy moderate tolls.

I would suggest that public improvements be effected by means of "corvées" (by which every individual should be compelled to contribute a certain amount of piece-work, or its equivalent in money), if this method should be found more congenial to the people than having to pay rates; for I am aware how loth they are to contribute even the smallest amounts for such purposes, owing to the suspicion they entertain, perhaps with good reason, that their funds will be misappropriated. Proper precaution should, however, be taken by Government to prevent the "corvées" becoming oppressive to the people. The natives would very soon appreciate the value of good roads in promoting traffic, to which they are at present total strangers.

It may not be irrelevant here to notice, as another means of ameliorating the condition of the country, that many districts, especially the rural ones, are

totally unprovided with medical practitioners, and the lives and health of the inhabitants are consequently jeopardised by empirics. The peasantry, especially the Mussulmans, are in such a state of poverty that no physician would be able to gain his livelihood by practising in the rural districts. In some of the Christian villages the community engages a medical man by an annual stipend to reside amongst them, but the Mussulman communities never think of providing for their wants in this way. The Porte, some years ago expressed the intention of appointing proper physicians and surgeons to reside wherever their services were required, but this promise was never fulfilled. The Government might, I think, prove its solicitude for the welfare of the population by carrying this beneficent project into effect. The whole charge need not be borne by the Government, but the salaries of the practitioners, the establishment and support of pharmacies, and allowance for travelling expenses, might be defrayed partly by Government and partly by the communities in the nature of a subsidy, whilst the practitioners might be allowed to receive moderate fees from their patients. The Imperial Medical Society of Constantinople might occupy itself with all the details relating to this question, and frame a system of superintendence and control of the medical officers.

The Government must, however, render it imperative that all communities, whether in the urban or in the rural districts, be provided with proper medical officers.

22. I think it would be premature at present to establish schools for all religions and classes. The ignorance of the Mussulmans on all educational matters is notorious: indeed, they delude themselves with the idea that they are so infinitely superior to the conquered races that it would be derogatory in them to improve their minds in the same way as the Christians do. The Rayahs have begun, of late years, to understand the immense importance of education, and the great advantages to be derived from it, and they demonstrate a most praiseworthy desire for acquiring knowledge and for having their children properly educated.

The utmost that a Turk will attempt is to follow the old beaten track of his ancestors, in merely learning to read the Koran, and to write sufficiently well to be able to compose a letter with tolerable correctness and elegance. The Turkish Khoja, or schoolmaster, is totally ignorant of geography, general history, natural science and modern languages; indeed, the Turks deem such knowledge to be quite useless.

The Christians would be most averse to sending their children to schools frequented by Turks, for their fears would be naturally aroused on the grounds that the morals of their children would be corrupted: besides which, the mere fact of their offspring being in daily intercourse with Mussulmans would awaken their religious susceptibilities in the highest degree, and form in itself an insurmountable barrier to such a project being carried into effect. On the other hand, Mussulman bigotry would be excited in an equal degree, so that independently of the other causes which would operate against such a scheme, this one alone, especially at the present moment, would preclude the possibility of its success.

When the seat of the malady exists in the mind of the nation, one of the most reasonable remedies that, humanly speaking, can be applied, is to organise a good system of education for the rising generation, and to leave it with that Supreme Intelligence who created the mind of man to bless those means. This remark applies more especially to the Mussulman race, and the Porte would best seek the welfare of its coreligionists by endeavouring, without further loss of time, to encourage learning amongst them, otherwise it is to be apprehended that in proportion as the conquered races advance in the march of intellect, their conquerors will retrograde. I would suggest that the Government should effect this laudable purpose, as far as possible, in such a manner that no particular race or creed should appear to be the object of its particular solicitude. For instance, a system of compulsory education might be introduced throughout the Empire, as a means for attaining this end; for it would thus serve to instruct both Mussulman and Christian youths, and in due course of time, colleges or schools where the higher branches of study would be taught, might possibly be established for all religions and classes.

I have already adverted to the deplorable deficiency of general knowledge amongst the Mussulmans; and the object which Government should have in view, would be to compel the rising generation to improve their minds beyond

the routine of mere elementary studies. The young modern Turk is not wanting in intelligence; still nothing can be done towards reclaiming him from his present state until the Porte provides schools with the necessary books and instructors.

The want of such establishments throughout the Empire is undeniable, but there would be doubtless much difficulty in finding Turks possessed of those intellectual attainments and moral principles which would render them fit to be superintendents of such schools. The selection of these masters might be left to the Porte, but it would be expedient that before undertaking this task, each master should be obliged to undergo an examination at Constantinople before a Board of competent persons, in order to test his capabilities, and no person should be allowed to act as a schoolmaster without being furnished with a certificate of competency, bearing testimony at the same time to the correctness of his moral principles.

With regard to the salaries of these schoolmasters, this expense might be arranged in the nature of a subsidy on the same plan as that recommended in the foregoing answer for defraying the expenses of medical practitioners. A grant from Government might be made in aid of the promotion of education, and a portion of the revenue at present squandered at the capital might be appropriated towards instilling into the minds of the rising generation those sound principles of morality which constitute the safeguard of civilized States and the true happiness of the people, but without which the most fatal consequences will await the country.

23. As far as I am competent to judge, my opinion would be adverse to such a measure. I think that it would multiply complications and intrigues to an extent that would render the always difficult task of obtaining justice, one verging on the impossible. There would be two officers to bribe instead of one, and the lot of the Mussulman and Christian would then become truly unbearable. The Christian Governor would, as a matter of course, be so accessible to influence by the agents of foreign Powers, and would be so entirely upheld by them, that were his Turkish colleague a weak man, the province would, in a great measure, be ruled by foreign agents; if, on the other hand, he were possessed of energy, and attempted to enforce a proper exercise of his prerogative, it is to be presumed that collisions between Mussulmans and Christians would ensue.

In short, I can conceive of no course whose adoption would be better calculated to tempt and facilitate such Powers as are at heart the Porte's enemies to create a state of things upon which they might form a plea for armed intervention, or by which a revolt of the Christian Rayahs against the Sultan might be hastened and encouraged, and the already too feeble authority of that Monarch entirely wrested from his hands. The fact, however, of the Christian population in this province being greatly in the minority might be adduced as a strong argument against the advisability of such a project being here carried into effect, and would appear, indeed, a sufficient reason for its necessity being altogether set aside.

It might be more advantageous that deputies elected by the provincial populations should reside at the capital to represent their interests, and be the medium of communication between the Central Government and the Provincial Councils, instead of the Capou-Kiahias, who at present act as the Pashas' agents at Constantinople. These deputies would, moreover, be instrumental in providing the great desideratum of obtaining redress at the Porte for such individual grievances as are beyond the sphere of action of the tribunals.

The Pashas are in the habit, on their removal from office, of carrying off the whole of the archives. This is productive of the most serious inconvenience. I would suggest that a permanent Government Secretary should be entrusted with the care of the archives, instead of the Pasha employing a private Secretary, who, if I may be permitted to use so homely a phrase, is generally the person who "does all the dirty work" for the Civil Governor.

24. It is a custom for subjects of the Porte to get foreign passports; and although I strongly condemn the conduct of those who grant foreign passports to Rayahs, I cannot refrain from expressing my conviction that they have frequently a well-founded excuse in seeking foreign protection. The Turkish Government ought to be alive to the fact of there being some peculiar advantages enjoyed by persons under foreign protection, which are denied to their

own subjects, since the latter attach so much value to the possession of a foreign passport. If the Porte were to inquire into the motive by which their subjects are actuated, it would find that it proceeded entirely from the shortcomings of the Turkish laws, and from their want of confidence in the justice of their rulers. Their object is mainly to obtain security for their personal liberty and property against the frequent vexatious and arbitrary proceedings of Turkish officials, which is at once afforded them by the acquisition of a foreign passport.

The impossibility of obtaining speedy redress in case of complaint, and the implicit obedience required of all classes by the Government functionaries, who act capriciously, and give no explanation as to their motives, furnish fresh reasons for the frequent occurrence of this practice. It is the Porte, therefore, which could best prevent its subjects withdrawing themselves from its allegiance by shielding them against attacks on their liberty and property. I will here cite a fact in illustration of this subject:—A merchant resident at Smyrna, under Russian protection, shortly after the commencement of the late war, having been offered by the authorities the alternative of quitting the country, or of renouncing his foreign protection, accepted the latter, and became an Ottoman subject. He soon after had great reason to repent of this step, for, at the instigation of the authorities, claims which had been settled in former years were brought against him by Turks and by others, and he was condemned to pay them, even though in some cases the claims had been previously examined and rejected. An attempt was moreover made to deprive him of a part of his landed property on frivolous pretexts; besides which, he was kept waiting for several hours without any ostensible motive. In fact, he states that his becoming a subject of the Porte seemed to be the signal for the authorities to commence persecuting him and compassing his ruin.

It is not, therefore, a matter for surprise in the face of similar facts, which are of daily occurrence, that the Rayahs should occasionally resort to the only means at hand of protecting themselves against the shortcomings of their legitimate rulers; and it is the greatest reproach upon the Turkish Government, as well as one of the most incontestable proofs of its present weak and degenerate state, that its own subjects should be compelled in self-defence to throw off their lawful allegiance, inasmuch as they are denied the protection which they have a right to expect, and are less favoured in this respect than foreigners: being the reverse of what occurs in civilized countries.

When a foreign passport cannot be procured, the Rayahs find it advantageous to carry on business in ostensible partnership with a foreigner or under a foreigner's power of attorney. This affords a great security for their property, and has become a common practice.

This anomalous state of things will not cease to exist until the Porte has completed the task of reforming the present defective administration of justice, and has provided for that purpose properly-constituted tribunals. When that time arrives, the Rayahs will, I doubt not, cheerfully return to their allegiance, and the foreign Powers willingly relinquish the privileges of distinct jurisdiction accorded by the Capitulations; but I may here add, that if those privileges were surrendered before any guarantee were afforded by Turkish institutions, no European would remain in the country.

Only one case has come under my notice of a Rayah obtaining a passport from Greece and exchanging it for a Russian passport.

Since writing the above, I have heard that an Armenian Rayah, named Adjem Oglou, a merchant of this place, has, within the last month, proceeded to Odessa, and returned here with a Russian passport. Notwithstanding the frequent representations of my Russian colleague, the Pasha has refused to recognize this individual otherwise than as an Ottoman subject.

Dardanelles, September 24, 1860.

(Signed) WILLIAM G. ABBOTT, *Acting Consul.*

No. 2.

Consul J. E. Blunt to Sir H. Bulwer.

Sir, *Uscup, September 24, 1860.*

WHEN at Nish I had the honour of being received several times by the Grand Vizier, and I was also in frequent communication with the principal members of his Staff, Christian and Turks, as well as with the Governor-General, Osman Pasha; I, therefore, did not fail to seize the opportunities which my relations with these officials placed within my reach, to procure from them information respecting the proceedings of the Mission in the Province of Nish; and I now beg to place before your Excellency all I have learnt in connection therewith.

I must first state that the Grand Vizier and all his subordinates told me more than once that the administration of this province was worse than they had reason to think; and that in consequence they were forced to prolong their stay there much longer than they had anticipated.

The Sadrazam remained about ten weeks in the province; he stopped a week at Berkoftza, a town contiguous to the district of Widdin; three weeks at Sciarkioi, between Sofia and Nish; and forty-two days at the latter town.

About 4,000 "arzuhals" (petitions) were addressed to his Highness by different parties in the province: several, many of them, carried frivolous complaints; and in some cases false charges, of a most serious nature, were advanced by the Bulgarian peasants against the native Beys, varying in nature and gravity, from the robbery of a goose ten years ago, to the ravishment of a young Christian virgin.

The false accusers, in the latter instance, confessed that they had been excited by designing parties to make this charge. They were sentenced to three years' incarceration.

The Grand Vizier, on his arrival in the Province of Nish, formed a temporary Council, before which all the most important and pressing cases were laid for settlement. Cases of less moment were referred to the Local Courts.

This Council had also to investigate the charges against the provincial officials. It was composed of the following Members of the Mission of his Highness:—M. Mussurus, M. Fotiades, M. A. Dadian, and M. Gabriel (Christian); Bessim Bey, Affif Bey, Djeodjet Effendi (Turks).

I have been told that the decisions of this Council were in most cases carried by vote; that his Highness, although he had no vote, was very often present at its deliberations; and that every sentence it issued could not be executed unless previously confirmed by him.

A Muvakat Medjlis (a Criminal Court, *pro tem.*), was also formed by the Vizier at Nish, and was composed of two Christians, two Turks, and one Jew, natives of the place, under the presidency of a certain Suleiman Bey, formerly Secretary of Legation at Vienna. All criminal cases were referred to this Court, and its sentences, if confirmed by the Grand Vizier, were immediately executed.

I accidentally had an opportunity of watching the proceedings of this Court, and I am glad in being able to report my having observed that the Christian members as well as the Jew were treated with the same regard as their Turkish colleagues, and that they took a prominent part in the deliberations.

The establishment of this Court will be the source of much social good: wherever it has been instituted, in Thessaly, Epirus, Salonica, and Monastir, crime (brigandage in particular) has abated.

Measures have also been taken by his Highness to secure the necessary firman from the Sultan for the construction of a commercial tribunal at Nish, and I am told that this instrument is daily expected.

The Grand Vizier having found that most of the members of the Medjlises of Berkoftza, Sciarkioi, and Nish, had acted with great negligence in the discharge of their duties, and were totally unfit for the position they occupied, forthwith dismissed them, and appointed others in their place. The new members were elected by the inhabitants of these towns, and their appointment appears to have given satisfaction to the Christians and Turks.

The Extraordinary Council had a great deal of business to transact; but most of its time was devoted to the investigation of the conduct of the local authorities, the charges against Greek ecclesiastics, the farmers of the taxes, and to the settlement of the Ghospodar question.

In my despatch of the 8th instant, I had the honour to report to your Excellency the result of the inquiry into the conduct of the ex-Governor-General of the province, Zeinel Pasha, now Zeinel Agha, and of his subordinates. Charges of a most serious nature were brought and proved against these functionaries, and the Grand Vizier, by removing them from a position which they had dishonoured by corruption, violation of law, and neglect of duty, has given much satisfaction to all classes of the population.

Osman Pasha, the actual Governor-General of Nish, placed in my hands a set of the original papers that were posted up in the principal quarters of that town notifying to the public the result of the inquiry into the conduct of these officials. These papers, accompanied with their translation, I have the honour to inclose herewith.

I beg here to state that in every case in which a person against whom a charge of receiving "rushvets" (bribes) was substantiated, such person was forced to pay to the local Treasury a sum equal to double the amount of the bribe he took. In this way considerable sums have been gleaned, and I have been given to understand that they will be used towards defraying the expenses in the construction of a large prison in the fortress of Nish. Such an edifice will be far more useful, and serve as a better example, than the "tower of human heads" raised some twenty years ago in the vicinity of Nish. And here I must observe that the inhabitants of this town fully expected that the Grand Vizier would have given orders to raze to the ground this monument, but they were disappointed: it stands there gloomily—a reproach on the past, and a warning to the future.

The charges against the Greek ecclesiastics were also of a very serious nature. The Archbishop of Sciarkioi was found guilty of receiving and giving bribes, of levying unjust fees on his flock, and, what is worse still, of having violated a Bulgarian girl. Charges of a like gravity were also proved against another priest of Sciarkioi. The Archbishop was dismissed from his diocese, and sent to Constantinople, there to be dealt with by the Porte. The other priest has been condemned to the galleys for life.

The priest of Lashotnitza, in the district of Leskowatz, one of the chiefs of the conspiracy against the local Rayahs, and to which I alluded in my report to your Excellency of the 7th instant, has been found guilty of having taken a very prominent part in the murder of the Kogiabashi Christo, and has in consequence been sentenced to be hung.

There were many charges of oppression and fraud against the farmers of the taxes: most of them were carried through the Court. Against Velko, a Bulgarian, 170 "arzuhals" (petitions) were lodged; and against Rangheli and Sovanco, both Bulgarians, 239!

There were also several complaints against an Armenian and some Turks for over-taxing the villages.

With reference to the oppressive system of farming the taxes, nothing definite has been decided by the Sadrazam. I have been told by members of his staff that he has seen enough in the provinces he has visited to convince him that it is of the utmost importance to abolish this system altogether; and I understand he is disposed to introduce in Roumelia the system now in force in Bosnia. At present he has addressed a "talimat" (series of instructions) to the provincial authorities, indicating the line of conduct they are to pursue in dealing with the exactions of the tax farmers.

As regards the Ghospodar question I need not enter into all its merits, as Mr. Longworth and Mr. Ricketts will have furnished your Excellency with detailed reports on this subject.

A very intimate knowledge of this question is necessary before one can take on himself to say which of the two parties, the Ghospodar landlords or tenants, is in the right.

The impression left on my mind by the personal inquiries I made on the subject, is that the serious dimensions to which the disputes between the landlords and tenants have reached, have been chiefly developed by the machinations of Zeinel Agha, when Pasha of Nish, and the Kogiabashi of that place.

The fact is, that about two years ago this ex-Pasha received notice that he was to be recalled: this did not suit his views; he, therefore, tried to foment troubles in the province, by agitating, through his tool the Kogiabashi, the Ghospodar question, which some years ago had caused trouble to the authorities. Having succeeded in this, he next alarmed the Porte by a tissue of misrepresentations, to the effect that the Bulgarian peasants were preparing a rising, gave a political colouring to the subject, which the state of Servia at the time appeared to varnish, and then asked for troops to support him in case the troubles he apprehended took place.

This manœuvre answered his purpose far better than he anticipated. His removal from Nish was countermanded; he was entreated by the Porte to arrange matters between the tenants and their landlords, and a special Commissioner was sent out to co-operate with him in the work of pacification. This individual saw what game the Pasha was playing. At first he hesitated what share he was to take in it, but ultimately sided with its author. The Pasha had everything his own way. Several tenants were imprisoned; others were exiled. The Pasha was supposed to have rendered to the Porte a great service; his salary was increased, and the Order of the Medjidie was conferred on his tool the Kogiabashi.

Since then the tenants have continued to evince much discontent and ill-feeling towards their landlords.

The Extraordinary Council was occupied with this question during most of the time his Highness remained in the province. Amid the mass of conflicting evidence that has been brought before it, there is plenty to show, what at one time was tried to be cloaked, that the tenants have been much oppressed by their landlords; and that indefensible acts have been committed by the latter, and their armed retainers, on the peasantry.

As regards the legality of the tenure, one of the chief points in dispute between the parties, in most cases it has been confirmed, but in some the landlords could not substantiate their rights, and the lands in dispute were given to the tenants as original proprietors.

For instance, in the District of Leskowatz, out of eighteen villages that would not recognize their landlords thirteen carried their cause before the Council, and were ultimately declared "mustekil" (independent).

In Nish and Sciarkioi, however, most of the Ghospodars managed to establish the validity of their title-deeds.

On the eve of the Sadrazam's departure from Nish, the Council closed its proceedings on this question by issuing a series of rules for the improvement of the relations between the landlords and their tenants.

Before passing into another subject, I must add that it appears to me as if the Council has gone over the Ghospodar question too hurriedly, and that sufficient opportunity has not been afforded to it in order to arrive at an accurate decision on the subject. Had the Council proceeded to the principal villages in dispute, or deputed some fit person to do so, for the purpose of conducting inquiries on the spot, much more light would have been thrown on the claims of the tenants. The rules I have alluded to, on the whole, as they stand, may be regarded as a compromise between the parties; and although they may serve to arrest their disputes for the present, they contain, in my humble opinion, elements of inconvenience and future discord between them.

My intention is not in any way to depreciate the importance of the changes that have been introduced, or the proceedings of the Council itself: what I wish to place on record is that the whole subject, so important and full of responsibility, does not appear to me to have been thoroughly investigated.

The police service came in for a share of charges; but, on the whole, of a nature which show that they chiefly arise from its bad organization. Nothing certain has been decided about it. I am under the impression that, as regards the Province of Nish, it has not been thought politic to introduce the Christian element in this service.

In alluding to the police I must not omit to report that a serious charge against one of its members was proved before the Extraordinary Council. The small burial-ground of Golomosel, a village in Pallianitza Nahia, in district of Leskowatz, was defiled about five months ago by a native Turk, and among other mis-deeds he there committed, he disturbed the tomb of a Bulgarian girl, exposed the body and otherwise insulted it. The Zaptieh (policeman) in the vicinity connived at this act, which at the time much irritated the peasantry.

The Council sentenced the Turk to five, and the policeman to three years, imprisonment.

The severity with which the Grand Vizier proceeded against brigandage in the different provinces he passed through has struck a blow to this evil; and the establishment of the Muvakat Medjlis, before which Christian evidence is now respected, is calculated to combat it more successfully.

The following is a list of the bandits that have been publicly executed:—Shumla, 1 Turk; Rustchuk, 3 Turks, 1 Bulgarian; Widdin, 2 Turks, 1 Bulgarian; Nish, 3 Bulgarians, 2 Servians: total, 13.

In the Northern Districts in Province of Nish, brigandage began to acquire extensive proportions; and moreover much matter has transpired to show, beyond a doubt, that it was promoted by designing parties in Servia.

On the subject of forced proselytism it appears, from what I have heard, that in almost every case that was brought before the Council, sufficient proof was wanting to establish that force had been used in the act of conversion.

During the mission of the Grand Vizier in the province, two Bulgarian females, who had some years ago abjured their faith, claimed permission, and were allowed to recant.

Nine others, who had at different periods abjured Christianity, on being examined by the Council, declared that they had done so voluntarily, and that they were satisfied with their state. Most of them are married to Turks, and are well off.

At Sciarkioi and Nish several Christian females wished to go over to the Turks, but, with one or two exceptions, they were rejected on account of their young age.

On the whole, the Grand Vizier seems to have shown a spirit of toleration in dealing with this subject.

In my despatch dated the 5th of June, 1859, I exposed the disgraceful proceedings of the Medjlis and Beys of the district of Djhuma, included in the province of Nish.

The state of this district could not fail to draw the attention of the Grand Vizier, but owing to press of business his Highness placed the matter in the hands of the Governor-General, with orders to proceed with severity against the accused. Several of these have been brought to Nish, and are there under arrest waiting their trial.

The winding-up of many other cases has also been left to the care of the Governor-General, accompanied with suitable instructions for his guidance; and I understand his Excellency has been directed by the Grand Vizier to proceed to the Southern districts in his jurisdiction, through which his Highness has not passed, for the purpose of examining the conduct of the Mudirs, Medjlises, and other subaltern authorities. I therefore availed myself of an early opportunity to give to his Excellency Osman Pasha the information I possessed on the state of these districts.

I have, &c.
(Signed) J. E. BLUNT.

Inclosure 1 in No. 2.

Proclamation.

(Translation.)

ZEINEL PASHA, Governor of Nissa, convicted of having received bribes and embezzled the public revenues, was, in accordance with the Criminal law, deprived of his rank and decoration, and condemned to twelve years' detention in the fortress of Dimetoca, not to be again employed in the service of the State.

Raghib Bey, ex-Accountant of Nissa, convicted of having received bribes, was, in accordance with the Criminal law, deprived of his rank, and condemned to three years' detention in the fortress of Dimetoca.

Shakir Efendi, ex-Director of the Vakoufs of Nissa, convicted of having received bribes, and of committing forgery by altering official documents, was condemned to ten years' detention in the fortress of Widdin, according to the Criminal Code.

Salih Efendi, the Kiahya, convicted of having received bribes, of serving as an agent for giving and receiving them, and of engaging in the farming of taxes

under a borrowed name, contrary to the Regulations, was deprived of his rank, and condemned to six years' detention in the fortress of Widdin, according to law.

Mahmoud Aga, ex-Mudir of Sciarkioi (Nissava), convicted of receiving bribes, and of serving as an agent for giving and receiving them, was, in accordance with the Criminal Code, condemned to three years' detention in the Castle of Widdin.

Veli Bey, ex-Mudir of Berkoftcha, convicted of having farmed the revenues, contrary to the Regulations, of having received bribes, and of having embezzled the public revenues, was deprived of his rank, and condemned to six years' detention in the fortress of Dimetoca, according to law.

Mola Aarif, ex-Cashier of Leskoftcha, convicted of giving bribes, was condemned to three years' detention in the fortress of Widdin, according to law.

Krainali Yorghi, ex-member of the Medjlis of Nissa, convicted of having received bribes, and of having served as an instrument for giving and receiving the same, was condemned to five years' detention in the fortress of Dimetoca, according to law.

Inclosure 2 in No. 2.

Proclamation.

(Translation.)

ARAB SULEIMAN, ex-Chief of the Police at Nissa, convicted of receiving bribes, of serving as an instrument for giving and receiving them, of having oppressed and wronged the people, and of having robbed the revenues of the State, has been condemned to six years' detention in thefor tress of Dimetoca, in accordance with the Criminal Code.

Talib Aga, farmer of the tithes of Berkoftcha, convicted of having raised from the people more than the legal amount of tithes, and of having exercised oppression, was condemned to restore the surplus and to three years' detention in the fortress of Widdin, according to the Criminal Law.

Noureddin Aga, tithe-farmer of the same district, convicted of the same offence, underwent the same condemnation.

Iznepolli Vaughel, farmer of the pig-taxes of the Leskoftcha district, convicted of having given and received bribes, and of having served as an instrument in giving and receiving them, and of having raised from the people more than the legal amount of tax, and of having oppressed them, was condemned to restore the surplus and to eight years' detention in the fortress of Dimetoca, according to the Criminal Law.

Pashwagi, farmer of the taxes of Nissa, convicted of having given bribes, was condemned to three years' detention in the fortress of Widdin, according to the Criminal Law.

Mola Murad, one of the farmer Talib Aga's men, convicted of having received more than the due amount of tithes from the people, and of having oppressed them, was condemned to one and a-half year's imprisonment in the prison of Nissa, according to the Criminal Code.

Hadgi Ali, rural police agent of Leskoftcha, convicted not only of not having apprehended a certain Bekir, a robber, but of having received a sum of money from his father, was condemned to five years' detention in the fortress of Widdin.

No. 3.

Consul Calvert to Lord J. Russell.—(*Received October* 15.)

(No. 33.)

Monastir, September 27, 1860.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to transmit to your Lordship, herewith inclosed, a copy of my despatch of this date to Her Majesty's Ambassador at the Porte, relating to the Grand Vizier's arrival at Monastir.

I have, &c.

(Signed) CHARLES J. CALVERT.

Inclosure in No. 3.

Consul Calvert to Sir H. Bulwer.

(Extract.)

Monastir, September 27, 1860.

I HAVE the honour to report to your Excellency that his Highness the Grand Vizier, Mehemed Kiprisli Pasha, made his entry into Monastir on the 25th instant, arriving from Uscup, Kinpruli, and Perlépé. The whole town went out to welcome his Highness, whose reception was a most brilliant one.

Accompanied by my colleagues the Vice-Consuls of Austria and Greece, I went, in plain clothes, to the spot outside the town where tents had been prepared for the reception of his Highness and his numerous suite. After receiving in his tent the Turkish civil and military officers, his Highness expressed a wish to see the Consuls, and he received us most courteously. I was given to understand subsequently that the Grand Vizier felt gratified at the unofficial manner in which the Consuls had greeted him.

Since his arrival, the Grand Vizier has been occupied with inquiries into the general condition of this province. Yesterday he summoned all the members of the Grand Council, and the Primates of the Mussulman, Christian, and Jewish communities, and undeceived them as to the truth of the rumour which had been circulated in the town to the effect that he intended to stay at Monastir only three days. His object was, he said, to remain here sufficient time to enable him to ascertain what, if any, were the causes of complaint on the part of the population. His Highness added, that he had heard that, previous to his arrival, the public Scribes of the town had been instructed to abstain from writing any petitions to his address; and he hoped this was untrue, because he had wished it to be known that he was ready to receive the just complaints of all who had any to proffer, and that he would act upon them. Since this manifestation of his Highness's wishes, petitions have been freely given in; but the subjects to which they refer are not yet known to me. Although I have been informed that a list of the names of eighteen persons connected with the administration of this province, and suspected of illegal proceedings, has been handed in to the Grand Vizier, there is no outward appearance as yet of the conduct of any one of these having become the object of a formal investigation. It would seem as though his Highness were desirous of collecting as much information as lies in his power before prosecuting them.

The very moment of his arrival, the Grand Vizier directed one of the gentlemen attached to his Mission to obtain a Return of all persons actually suffering imprisonment at Monastir, showing every particular as to the cause for which, and the article of the Criminal Code by which, they have been condemned.

Yesterday I had the honour of waiting upon his Highness, who treated me with marked affability. He kept me more than half-an-hour in conversation, in the course of which he touched upon the object of his Mission, and summed up, under four heads, the subjects with reference to which he contemplated, on his return to the capital, taking remedial measures. These were:—

1. The mode of collecting the tithes;
2. The police system;
3. The abuses of the Christian clergy;
4. The attributes of the Local Councils.

With respect to the first point, his Highness objected to the system of farming out the tithes to speculators.

As to the second, he observed that the police were too much underpaid for either honesty or zeal to be expected from them.

With reference to the third point, the rapacity and petty tyranny of the bishops, of which, during his tour, he had had ample evidence, were greater and more keenly felt by the Christian population than any which they suffered at the hands of the Mussulmans.

On the subject of the Local Councils, the fourth point, the Grand Vizier was of opinion that they should be merely an administrative body, divested of all judicial functions.

No. 4.

Consul Calvert to Lord J. Russell.—(*Received October* 26.)

(No. 35.)
(Extract.)

Monastir, October 4, 1860.

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith inclosed to your Lordship, a copy of my despatch under date of the 30th ultimo, with its inclosure, to Her Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople, relating to the proceedings of the Grand Vizier during his stay at Monastir.

Inclosure 1 in No. 4.

Consul Calvert to Sir H. Bulwer.

Monastir, September 30, 1860.

Sir,

IN continuation of my despatch of the 27th instant, reporting the arrival of the Grand Vizier at Monastir, and his proceedings up to that date, I have the honour to inform your Excellency that the object of his Highness's mission in this part of the country has been defeated, in great measure, by the pertinacity with which the Christians have disregarded every inducement held out to them to make known their grievances. On the Grand Vizier having traced this singular remissness to the fear that, after his departure, the complainants would be exposed to the malignity of those against whose irregular proceedings they had sought redress, his Highness told the leading men of the place that, if they would only hand in written statements to him, privately, he would take care to conceal their names until such time as justice had been done in their cases. The Grand Vizier also endeavoured, through the Christian gentlemen attached to his Mission, to obtain from their co-religionists in this town some definite statement of the wants and grievances of the community at large. Both these means have failed to elicit a simple complaint of a nature that came within the immediate scope of his Highness's mission. The only information vouchsafed by the class of Christians who may be taken to represent the opinions of their community, has been, that "they have many things to complain of, but dare not say what they are, as they are not sure of the consequences." His Highness has naturally felt much disappointment, for, besides the distrust towards himself and the gentlemen of his Mission which their silence, thus accounted for, of itself implies, the Grand Vizier finds his good intentions frustrated by the very persons he came here to benefit.

The petitions received by his Highness, as I am informed, are generally of an insignificant character, having reference to small debts, strayed and stolen cattle, and similar petty matters. There are, however, I understand among the number a few petitions relating to private wrongs which, contrary to the expectation of the complainants, have been referred to the Grand Medjlis, some of the members of which happen to be parties personally interested.

I have, through the medium of Mr. Fotiades, drawn the Grand Vizier's attention to what, on inquiry, I ascertained to be the standing grievances of the Christians in the Province of Monastir. They are:—

1. The mode collecting the farmed revenues, and principally the tithes;
2. The attributes of the Medjlises, which enable the members to command unlimited power without, and paramount influence within, the Council, to the detriment of those who have neither voice nor friend there;
3. The wine and spirit tax; they would wish this vexatious and inquisitorial tax to be converted into an assessment, instead of being levied at the rate of 20 per cent. on the value of the article; and,
4. The Poliacks, or "Gardes Champêtres," appointed by the Local Government, who are in the habit of practising with impunity a series of annoying and even rapacious customs towards the peasants, which can no longer be tolerated.

As to the first and second grievance, my preceding despatch will have informed your Excellency that the Grand Vizier had already contemplated applying a remedy; but whether the other two will be taken into consideration,

or else disregarded for want of having been brought forward in a definite form, remains to be seen.

A Christian girl of Banitsa, carried off by two Turks about three weeks ago, and since then secluded in a Turkish house, was yesterday brought before the Grand Vizier in a "ferijé," and declared to be a Mahometan of her own choice. Her father had had no free access to her at this place. There is great indignation amongst the Christians in consequence.

An Albanian Mussulman was hanged in the market-place this afternoon. His crime was highway robbery committed on a Christian three years ago.

The Sultan's warrant for the decapitation of a Christian youth convicted of the wilful murder of an Albanian Mussulman is expected to be carried into effect to-morrow. Efforts have been made in various directions to suspend the execution of the sentence of death in this instance on account of alleged irregularity in the proceedings of the Criminal Court. The Council, presided by the Grand Vizier in person, having decided that the law must take its course, a protest against the execution, signed by all the Christian corporations, was presented to his Highness this evening whilst he was returning from a drive into the country. I beg leave to inclose herewith a copy and translation of the document in question, which was delivered at my door soon after the presentation of the original.

The conduct of no public functionary at this place has undergone investigation. It seems to have been expected that, with the view to encourage complaints to come forward, the Grand Vizier would have placed at least one of the notoriously delinquent officials under arrest. There can be no doubt that had his Highness thought it fit to resort to such an expedient as this, the example would have inspired with confidence those who now refrain from laying informations against high-placed and influential parties here.

The justice done at Nish, and other places in Roumelia, has scarcely affected this population. They have a sufficiently developed sense of their importance to expect that their own case would be dealt with in the abstract.

It is greatly to be regretted that the Grand Vizier should have made so short a stay at Monastir. It had been almost better had he not come at all. Indeed, so far as I have sounded the prevailing feeling amongst the Christians at this place, they think his visit will prove to have done them more harm than good.

Whatever may be the State reasons which, by urgently requiring the Grand Vizier's early return to the capital, have prevented his Highness from thoroughly examining into the condition of this large province, the Porte would do wisely, if it values the goodwill of its Christian subjects, to send at once another of its statesmen to carry through to its conclusion the task which has just been only imperfectly begun here.

The Grand Vizier takes his departure to Salonica to-morrow morning.

I have, &c.
(Signed) CHARLES J. CALVERT.

Inclosure 2 in No. 4.

Protest.

(Translation from the Greek.)

TASCO, the servant of Filio the carpenter, was, about a year ago, cast into prison, accused as the murderer of a certain young Turk, although it was he (the Turk), with others his companions, who had attempted to assassinate a certain neighbour and friend of Tasco.

In the month of May of the present year, the population having been informed that Tasco had been condemned to death in an underhand and informal manner, held a meeting and demanded by petitions addressed to the Governor Abdi Pasha, and to the Consuls, the revision of the trial, they being convinced of the innocence of young Tasco.

It is now rumoured that a decision for his decapitation will be put into execution by order of the Grand Vizier.

The Christian population of Monastir therefore protest against this act.

Monastir, September $\frac{18}{30}$, 1860.

[Here follow the signatures of the Trade Corporations.]